"THE DOCTOR ISN'T IN!"

By OLIVE GRAY.

Dr. Charles Morse walked thoughtfully to his office. The verb was not unusual, the adverb was, for although he always walked he was seldom thoughtful.

Could his thoughts have been photographed, the picture would have been of a breakfast table with a persuasive sister on one side, himself on the other. And could a dictagraph have absorbed the conversation, the record would have been as follows:

"But, Charles, dear, we girls have counted so much on our clubhouse. Suffragists need a headquarters as much as any other society, and how are we to get it if every man refuses a donation as you do. We were counting on a hundred dollars from you anyway."

"Good heavens, sis, I work days for that much. Besides, I don't approve of suffrage."

"You're horrid, Charlie, and I won't talk to you any more. But never mind; we'll get it yet. I'll send Jane Gregory after you. There isn't a man in the city who can resist her, and I am morally certain that if she asks you for a hundred dollars you'll give one long look into her lovely eyes and dig down in your jeans for double the amount."

"Not if I see her first!" her brother answered with heat. "I don't care how pretty she is. I won't give a cent for any fool thing like that."

Doctor Charles reached his office and "opened up" himself, for Mary, his office girl, was away on a vacation. He sterilized instruments, put bottles within easy reach and addressed a set of teeth for mailing, for Charlie was a dentist. Then he opened the paper to see if he could get a girl for two weeks to take Mary's place. But not a soul wanted to work. And then a happy thought struck him. "I'll put a card on the office door, 'Girl Wanted.' Maybe that will catch somebody."

It did.

About ten o'clock, while he was adjusting some bridgework, the outside office door opened, and someone came in. Doctor Charlie went out to see, and there was a young girl, demure, shy and wide-eyed.

"I saw your card," she began diffidently.

"Good! I need an office girl for two weeks. Would you like to try it at ten dollars a week?" He rather hoped she would. He thought it would be pleasant to have her around.

"I can stay right now if you want me."

"All right; that's fine. Put your things in that closet and I'll give you instructions as soon as I'm through. And, by the way, if anybody—a lady—comes to see me, tell her I'm not in. She has gray eyes—well, I can't describe her exactly, but I rather think you'll know. She's after money, and I'd rather not see her."

"I understand," said the girl quietly unpinning her hat.

The morning wore on; patients came and went, and the new girl seemed to be doing very well. About noon he distinctly heard her say to someone who came in, "The doctor is not in."

About two o'clock, in the silence of the office he again heard the outer door open and the girl say distinctly, "No, the doctor is not in!"

Doctor Charlie was indignant. "The idea. Sis is rather overdoing it, or else that girl she's sending has more brass than I gave her credit for, to come twice in a day."

But what was his surprise when for a third time he heard the new girl telling someone that the doctor was not in.

At five o'clock the last patient had departed, and Doctor Charlie at last had time to give his assistant some instructions.

"I want to compliment you," he began, "on the way you got rid of that girl. Her name's Gregory."

"That girl?" she asked, her wide eyes opening still wider. Her mouth, with its wistful little droop, was getting a gripping hold on the young dentist's heart.

"Yes. I heard you tell her three times that I wasn't in."

"Oh, but they were different people."

"What do you mean?"

"The first was Mrs. Arnfeld. She's out canvassing for the new minister's home. I thought you wouldn't want to be disturbed."

"Right O!"

"And then there was Mrs. McArdle. She's determined to have a new Y. W. C. A. And the last was from your church. They are going to burn tribute generously, and besides they want to—"

"That's plenty," gasped Doctor Charlie. "But what's happened to Jane, I wonder?"

"I'm Jane," said the girl. "You see, we're all trying to earn money for the new clubhouse, and when I saw your sign I thought I'd like to try it here. And don't you think when I've sidetracked so many people today you might give us a little donation? Just a small one would do—a hundred dollars or so."

Doctor Charlie dropped limply into a chair. "I lose," he said weakly.

And, after the suffragettes had their building, and Doctor Charlie and Jane were married, she told him how she did it.

"There wasn't a soul there to see you that day for subscriptions," she confessed. "I made it all up."

ACROSS THE STREET

By ISABEL FROST.

"One of the joys of living in a city is not knowing or caring who your next door neighbor is, and equal indifference on his or her side."

Jean poured tea with her customary air of absorbed nonchalance.

"Now, where I came from everyone knows all about you. It's simply terrible. You never feel grown up. I'm nineteen and nobody called me Miss Ashton, not a single person. They just said Bab, or that Ashton girl. And because I wanted to break away by myself and do something in the world they—well, they didn't approve."

Hartley eyed her curiously from his place on the high window seat. What a queer, self-sufficient little wanderer she was. It was quite as if a very young, adventurous kitten had started off to see the world by itself. It was mighty nice of Jean to get her under her wing, he thought. Jean was always doing that sort of thing, opening the doors of her Ninth street studio wide to all heart wayfarers who needed cheering up. He could not measure up all that her faith and comradeship had meant to him during his own uphill fight in New York. Perhaps the only thing about Jean he did not like was that she herself never seemed to need help from anyone. He would have loved to know she needed him; that his presence and companionship were a strength to her; that she even missed him when he failed to show up for a few days. As it was, she merely gave him the usual smile and happy greeting, and went on with her work.

It was a week later when he got the tickets to Savelli's musicale. There was a splendid 'cellist and a good soloist, a young soprano who sank folk songs. He thought Jean might like to go. But instead she told him over the 'phone that she was too busy, and asked if he would mind taking Bab. The kiddie was lonely and rather at sea, said Jean.

That was the beginning, and he went on sullenly at first, then indignantly, believing it was all Jean's fault. Bab enjoyed going around with him to the exhibitions and little studio teas immensely. She was pretty and exuberant, tantalizing and whimsical.

One day she came up to Jean's studio rather white and discouraged.

"You know I'm not earning anything at all, not a cent," she said suddenly. "It's funny how little one can live on here, isn't it? I hate spaghetti and cereals. Mother was the most wonderful cook you ever saw. I don't see how people starve in garrets and paint or write masterpieces."

Jean did not take her seriously. It was so usual to say you are not making money, and only meant you were not earning the hundreds you had hoped to.

The morning of the fourth day a phone call came from Miss Milligan, the landlady across the street.

"You're little Miss Ashton's friend, aren't you? Well, she's pretty sick, and if something isn't done the doctor says she's got to go to a hospital right away. It's pneumonia, he says, and she hasn't been eating regular."

Jean stood in the middle of the floor, thinking quickly. Then in five minutes she had called up a good nurse, her own doctor, and had made arrangements for bringing Bab over to her own cozy suite of rooms. When Hartley came down at noon she met him at the door with her finger to her lips. He listened in silent wonder as she told him what she had done.

"But your work—"

"Never mind my work. We've got to feed her up and put her on her feet again. Go and send a telegram to her mother for me. Answer that phone, will you, while I write this?"

Hartley obeyed, and turned from it to her with a curious smile.

"There's somebody downstairs from Haines Falls," he said. "He wants to know if you know where Miss Ashton is. Isn't she from Haines Falls?"

"I'll see him." Jean went down the winding staircase quickly, and met the tall, anxious-faced youngster waiting there.

"I got a letter from Bab—from Miss Ashton—last night," he said brokenly. "We were engaged, you know, and she broke it, but she wrote me she was on the last lap, and she didn't care what happened she was so hungry and sick. So I came at once to take her home. I wondered if you'd fix it so we could be married first."

Half an hour later Jean left the two together in the darkened room, Bab, her eyes bright with fever, but conscious and holding fast to the big boy's hand. Hartley sat in the studio on the window seat waiting for her. She went to him; her eyes rather tired now that the nerve-strain was over.

"I'm going to let him take her home as soon as she can travel. You don't know how guilty I feel, Wade, to have let her live right across the street and get into such a state. I thought, of course, you were looking after her if you were in love with her."

"Who said I was?"

"You did, over in the square."

"I said I was in love."

"Well?"

"Jean," he said softly, despairingly, "Jean, can't you see anything; can't you understand anything at all?"

The nurse stepped to the door for something, but after one glance retreated noiselessly. There is such a thing as professional discretion.